

VZCZCXYZ0008
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSG #0489 1491207
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 281207Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3299
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2045
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1866
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1734

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000489

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IIP/G/WHA, INR/R/MR, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA STATE FOR
INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [KPAO](#) [PINR](#) [KMDR](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - CHILEAN EDITORIAL ON DEMISE OF FARC LEADER
MARULANDA

¶1. On May 27, conservative, independent "La Tercera," (circ.
129,000) carried an editorial entitled "Marulanda's Death: A Chance
for Peace." Quotes:

¶2. "The FARC originated almost half a century ago in the context of
the Cold War and the civil war that tore apart Colombia from 1948 to
¶1958. The guerrilla group was founded with political and social
roots that are unrelated to what the majority of Colombians are
experiencing today as part of a healthy democratic society.... The
death of Manuel Marulanda represents a window of opportunity....
There is consensus that Marulanda was the unifying element in the
FARC's war against the government of Colombia... and that in his
absence it is more likely that the current policy of regaining
territory from the FARC will be more successful.... There is also a
chance for the FARC's new leadership to move toward peace and begin
a new era in its ties with the government, end the fighting, release
hostages, and for thousands of guerrilla fighters to eventually
rejoin society...."

¶3. "But Marulanda's death should also serve to show the extent to
which the FARC has abandoned any attempt to bring about social
change... and has instead become an organization that relies on
kidnapping, extortion, and the protection of narcotics trafficking
as its main sources of income."

URBAN